

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 SEOUL 06360 250627Z

15

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 USIA-15 OMB-01 NIC-01 SAJ-01 SAM-01 IO-14 COA-02

AID-20 DRC-01 /156 W

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R 250528Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6106

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USLO PEKING

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 6360

CINCPAC FOR AMBASSADOR SNEIDER

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, KS, CH,

SUBJ: PRC RELEASES ROK FISHERMEN

REF: SEOUL 3168 (NOTAL)

1. PRC RETURN OF NINE ROK FISHERMEN RESCUED BY CHINESE IN AUGUST HAS BEEN PUBLICIZED IN ROK PRESS AND HAS PROMPTED MOFA TO CONSIDER MAKING PUBLIC STATEMENT OF GRATITUDE TO PRC.

2. FISHERMEN WERE RESCUED FROM THEIR TYPHOON-DAMAGED BOAT IN EAST CHINA SEA AUGUST 21 BY CHINESE VESSEL AND TAKEN TO PRC, WHERE THEY WERE KEPT FOR ONE MONTH AND THEN RELEASED AT HONG KONG BORDER. CHINESE HAD NOT NOTIFIED ROK OF RESCUE, BUT FISHERMEN, WHO RETURNED TO  
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PAGE 02 SEOUL 06360 250627Z

SEOUL SEPT 22, SAID THEY HAD BEEN WELL TREATED

THROUGHOUT STAY IN CHINA.

3. MOFA IS CAUTIOUSLY OPTIMISTIC OVER FISHERMEN'S RETURN, WHICH CONTRASTS WITH PRC'S HOSTILE BEHAVIOR TOWARD ROK FISHING BOATS LAST SPRING (REFTEL). NORTHEAST ASIA DIVISION II (CHINA) CHIEF KWON TOLD EMBOFF THAT MOFA REALIZES CHINESE GESTURE MAY NOT HAVE GREAT SIGNIFICANCE, AS PRC HAS TRADITIONALLY RETURNED SHIPWRECKED FISHERMEN OF ALL NATIONS. HOWEVER, KWON SAID MOFA IS CONSIDERING MAKING PUBLIC RESPONSE OF APPRECIATION TO PRC AS ONE MORE EFFORT TO OPEN DIALOGUE WITH PEKING.

4. KWON SAID THAT WHEN PRC RETURNED SOME ROK FISHERMEN IN SEPTEMBER 1973, AFTER HOLDING THEM FOR 37 DAYS, MOFA ELECTED TO THANK CHINESE VERY QUIETLY AND SENT MESSAGE OF GRATITUDE THROUGH BRITISH VIA LONDON. BRITISH SUBSEQUENTLY INFORMED MOFA THAT PRC HAS EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR ROK MESSAGE ALTHOUGH CHINESE HAD OBSERVED THAT RELEASE OF FISHERMEN WAS ROUTING ACTION.

5. IN PRESENT CASE, KWON SAID, ROKG MAY DECIDE USE ROK FISHERMEN'S ASSOCIATION OR OFFICE OF FISHERIES TO SEND A "NON-POLITICAL" MESSAGE OF APPRECIATION. HE SAID MOFA IS NOT HOPEFUL OF PROGRESS IN QUEST TO ESTABLISH COMMUNICATIONS WITH PEKING BUT INDICATED THAT FAILURE OF QUIET APPROACHES MAY LEAD ROK TO TRY MORE PUBLIC CHANNELS TO HIGHLIGHT ITS INTEREST IN FRIENDLY CONTACTS WITH THE PRC.  
ERICSON

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## Message Attributes

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